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ABSTRACT

The 1977 Navajo Labor Force Survey, an attempt to estimate size and characteristics of the Navajo labor force, uses data from 1,900 unemployed and 1,481 employed adult Navajos on the Navajo Nation, and 438 unemployed and 314 employed Navajos in adjacent towns. Employment opportunities on and near the reservation are severely limited because of lack of manufacturing, heavy industry, and related support services; this accounts for high male unemployment rates and is also important for women, but unemployed females are more likely to emphasize lack of skills/education as barriers to finding adequate employment. The employed Navajo labor force is stable; those who have jobs tend to have fairly long job tenure, largely determined by high numbers of workers employed by federal and tribal agencies. Well-educated Navajos are more likely to find employment than are less-educated Navajos. Navajo women are more apt to be employed than Navajo men. A substantial majority of unemployed Navajos of both sexes desire to work, would work if employment opportunities were available, are actively seeking employment, and indicate willingness to expend substantial effort to obtain employment, including moving off-reservation, commuting long distances, and participating in job-training programs to upgrade skills. (MH)

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THE 1977 NAVAJO LABOR FORCE SURVEY: A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS*

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THE 1977 NAVAJO LABOR FORCE SURVEY: A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

The Navajo Labor Force Survey (NLFS) was an attempt to estimate the size and characteristics of the Navajo labor force by surveying unemployed and employed adult Navajos in the Navajo Nation and adjacent border towns. This survey was the most comprehensive effort undertaken to date to document the characteristics of the Navajo labor force. Initial data collection was begun in 1977, but the data collected were never fully analyzed and reported. This report, though now historical rather than contemporary, is an attempt to make some of the findings of the NLFS available to the interested public. Some understanding of the socio-demographic as well as attitudinal characteristics of employed and unemployed Navajos living on or near the reservation may be useful to administrators and planners concerned with current or proposed energy developments on the reservation, and to students of Navajo life generally. However, it is recognized that many of the demographic details of the present analysis are already dated, and that results of the 1980 census, when available, are much better sources for statistical data on the employment characteristics of the Navajo than are the findings reported here.

The Navajo labor force has been growing at a substantial rate for many years. The 1972 Navajo Ten Year Plan estimated the Navajo labor force at that time at about 40,000 persons. That plan also highlighted the problem of unemployment on the reservation. It was estimated that of those 40,000, only 15,000 had steady employment (Navajo Ten Year Plan, 1972). The unemployment rate at that time was estimated at 62 percent of the total labor force.

By 1982, the total Navajo population of working age had grown to 84,361 (see Table 1). Of this number, 24,852 were not in the labor market because of student status, disability, lack of available child care, or some related reason. This left a potential labor force of 59,509 persons. (A strategy for Navajo Economic Development, 1982).

TABLE 1

NAVAJO RESERVATION
POTENTIAL LABOR FORCE

1982

Population of Working Age	84,361
Population Not in Labor Force	
Students	13,158
Men Disabled, Retired Institutionalized, etc.	1,818
Women Disabled, Retired Institutionalized, etc.	1,122
Women for whom no child care facilities are available	8,754
Subtotal	24,852
Potential Labor Force	59,509

Source: A Strategy for Navajo Economic Development, 1982.

While unemployment on the reservation had dropped to an all time low of 38 percent in 1980, by 1982 it had increased to an estimated 70.6 percent. It has been noted that the Navajo Reservation "is characterized by structural unemployment with a growing labor force. In many cases the unemployed cannot take advantage of employment opportunities on or off the reservation due to a lack of requisite skills and education" (A Strategy for Navajo Economic Development, 1982: 22). It has also been argued that many Navajo workers are basically unemployable because they are unwilling to be mobile. Many of these arguments are based on inadequate data. A detailed analysis of the Navajo Labor Force Survey will allow us to develop a comprehensive picture of the most important characteristics of the Navajo labor force.

Data Collection*

Questionnaires for the Navajo Labor Force Survey were designed by Bureau of Business and Economic Research of the University of New Mexico, with the assistance of several tribal offices. The study was seen as the first comprehensive survey of the Navajo labor force and was viewed primarily as an opportunity to learn about the characteristics of Navajo people relevant to potential energy development and economic opportunity, although some items relevant to information needs other than economic development were included.

The interview schedules were designed to facilitate easy translation into Navajo, if necessary, and were pretested with reference to both content and format. A Navajo field supervisor directed the interviewing process, and

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*This summary is a paraphrasing a capsulization of a research memorandum, "Navajo Labor Force Survey: Methods, Procedures, and First Order Data" by John L. Temple, John N. Sievers, and Lee B. Zink, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, the University of New Mexico.

a local "monitor" was hired in each of the five agencies on the reservation to help hire, train, and supervise interviewers. All interviewers were Navajo and had experience in interviewing and/or social science research. The total interviewing staff included about 30 personnel, or a monitor and five interviewers for each agency.

Sampling. The sampling universe for unemployed Navajos consisted of the names of approximately 1,500 persons who had registered with the Navajo Employment Service field offices during the previous 12 months, augmented by persons identified as currently unemployed by those individuals from the Employment Service records who were located and interviewed. The "snowballing" procedure was contined until 1,900 unemployed persons had been located and interviewed.

The sources for sampling the employed on-reservation Navajos were employment statistics for the Navajo Nation compiled by the Tribe's Office of Program Development. Firms located on the Navajo Nation were divided by number of employees into two categories, those with less than 100 employees and those with 100 or more employees. The tribal employment statistics showed that about two-thirds of all employees worked for the larger firms. To obtain the desired total sample size of 1,500 and keep the sample proportionate with respect to size of firm, about 975 interviews were needed from the larger firms. Interviews were conducted in all these firms, with the number of interviews per firm depending in part upon the proportion of all employees who were Navajo.

The smaller firms were sampled in clusters to minimize costs. The listing of smaller firms was divided into clusters or sets, and one firm from each cluster was selected, with a large proportion of the Navajo employees of that selected firm being interviewed.

The selection of employed and unemployed Navajos in the border towns was done by "snowball sampling" to reach preestablished quotas in these towns:

Sample Area	To interview	
	Unemployed	Employed
Gallup	159	106
Farmington	108	72
Flagstaff	45	31
Winslow/Holbrook	77	51
Page	30	20
Blanding/Bluff	31	20
Total	450	300

Interviewers simply requested their initial Navajo respondents to refer them to other local Navajos, unemployed or employed, until the desired number of completed interviews were obtained.

Interviewing. Interviewing began in February 1977, with the unemployed on Navajo Nation sample. Because over 60 percent of the registrants at Navajo Employment Services had left only post office box numbers as addresses, it was necessary to station an interviewer in each NES field office. These office interviewers were able to assist in locating respondents and also interviewed people as they came to register with NES. The interviewing of the unemployed on the Navajo Nation was completed on June 1, 1977; 1,900 interviews were obtained.

Interviewing for the employed on Navajo Nation Survey was begun during the first week of June 1977. All interviews were conducted at the place of employment. Field work for the employed survey ended on July 1, 1977, when approximately 1,500 interviews had been completed.

Field work among employed/unemployed Navajos in towns bordering the Navajo Nation was completed in November 1977. The off-reservation samples included 314 employed and 438 unemployed Navajos. Interviewers had difficulty

locating many unemployed off-reservation respondents, as many Navajos return to the Navajo Nation if unemployed.

The total number of usable interviews of each type is as follows: Employed Navajos and non-Navajos on Navajo Nation, 1,481; Unemployed Navajos on Navajo Nation, 1,900; Unemployed Navajos in border towns, 438; Employed Navajos in border towns, 314.

The sampling methods, in fact, were not as rigorous as they might have been. The border town samples turn out to be merely quota samples obtained via the snowball technique. And the Navajo Nation samples, biased by availability in the case of the unemployed and by a clustering procedure that, in retrospect, surely did not produce a truly representative sample, end up being, in some ways, partially stratified, partially quota, partially availability samples. The saving grace lies in the size of the samples, and the detail obtained on some topics. If the samples do not accurately represent the entire range and the irregularities of distribution which "truly" existed among the Navajo at the time of the survey, they do represent as accurate a picture as will ever be obtained for that time. And there is some comfort in the sheer size of the samples, especially the Navajo Nation samples: 1,900 unemployed and almost 1,500 employed Navajos. Technically, one can generalize merely to these sizable samples. However, given the law of large numbers, the findings that appear in clarity and significance probably apply to most unemployed, or employed, Navajos on the reservation. Generalizing from the border town samples requires greater caution.

We will begin our analysis of the labor force data by examining the characteristics of the Navajos who were employed at the time of the study. We will then turn to a discussion of those who are unemployed. The final section and the summary will draw some comparisons from all four of the samples and will discuss future employment and occupational preferences.

Characteristics of Employed Navajos

This section examines the background characteristics of Navajo men and women who were employed on the reservation and in the border towns surrounding the reservation in 1977 when the Navajo Employment survey was conducted. Table 2 presents the age distribution of Navajo men and women employed on or near the reservation. The age distributions are about as expected. They match quite closely those of the general Navajo population. One interesting observation is that those employed on the reservation were somewhat older than those working in the border towns. It appears that the younger Navajo had had some difficulty finding a job on the reservation, and many had moved to nearby border

Table 2 about here

towns. This notion is supported by the finding that the unemployed on the reservation and in the border towns were younger than those who had a job. Finally, the employed women were a bit younger than were the employed men.

The marital status of the employed Navajo are shown in Table 3. A large majority of the men and a smaller majority of the women were married. A significantly larger percentage of women than men were single. This is partly

Table 3 about here

a function of the women being younger. In addition, it is suspected that Navajo women may have begun to follow the trend of general society and have become more career oriented and more economically independent. This has delayed the age at which they marry as well as increased the number who remain single. The number of separated, divorced, and widowed was small, and similar to that for the unemployed. Overall, marital status did not appear to have any large impact on employment.

We were interested to see if the number of children a person had was related to employment. In the case of women, having children sometimes

Table 2

AGE OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON
THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS, 1977

Age Category	Navajo Reservation Men (N=576)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=851)	Border Towns Men (N=126)	Border Towns Women (N=184)
16 to 25	20%	35%	28%	43%
26 to 35	39	39	44	42
36 to 45	23	17	18	13
46 to 55	12	6	7	3
56 to 65	6	3	2	0
Over 65	1	1	0	0
Total	101	101	99	101

Table 3

MARITAL STATUS NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS, 1977.

Marital Status	Navajo Reservation Men (N=580)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=872)	Border Towns Men (N=127)	Border Towns Women (N=184)
Single	16%	31%	20%	31%
Married	77	53	73	48
Separated	5	6	2	9
Divorced	2	6	4	8
Widowed	1	4	0	4
Total	101	100	99	100

necessitates leaving the labor force, at least temporarily, and in the case of men the responsibility of children may pressure them to work. The number of children of those employed on and near the reservation is presented in Table 4. The families are larger than those in American society generally, but are similar to the typical Navajo family. The men, who are older, did have slightly larger families than did the women.

Table 4 about here

The education of employed Navajos, as shown in Table 5, is quite high.

Table 5 about here

Almost a third of the men employed on the reservation reported that they had a college degree, and thirteen percent an advanced degree. Also, the men were over-represented at both ends of the continuum, compared with women, a pattern typical of American society. Not surprisingly, the education of the employed both on and near the reservation was greater than that of the unemployed.

Finally, we were interested in the language skills (Navajo and English) of those with jobs. As can be seen in Table 6, almost all of the men and women claimed the ability to speak, read, and write English. Most reported that they speak Navajo, but only a minority were able to read or write Navajo. If the respondents reported accurately, they were more skilled in English than

Table 6 about here

they were in Navajo, and thus English facility should not be a major deterrent to employment. This is not to say that all employed Navajos in 1977 spoke, read, or wrote flawless English, but rather that English is the first language of a majority, and if their proficiency is deficient, it is a matter of upgrading and not one of learning a second language.

Employment Characteristics. The employment opportunities on and near the reservation are limited because of the lack of manufacturing, heavy industry,

Table 4

NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS, 1977

Number of Children	Navajo Reservation Men (N=582)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=875)	Border Towns Men (N=127)	Border Towns Women (N=185)
Zero	1%	2%	1%	0%
One	17	23	18	24
Two	9	15	3	13
Three	19	17	20	19
Four	21	20	21	17
Five-Six	22	15	22	17
Seven-Eight	9	7	8	6
Nine and Over	3	2	7	3
	101	101	100	99

Table 5

EDUCATION OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS, 1977

EDUCATION	Navajo Reservation Men (N=568)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=866)	Border Towns Men (N=123)	Border Towns Women (N=182)
Less Than High School	11%	4%	14%	8%
Some High School	8	7	4	14
High School Graduate	20	27	28	34
Some College	17	23	17	21
College Graduate	18	16	16	3
Advanced Degree	13	6	0	1
Post-Secondary Vocational Training	8	16	14	17
Military School	5	0	7	1
Total	100	99	100	99

Table 6

LANGUAGE SKILLS OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS, 1977

Language Skill	Navajo Reservation Men (N=582)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=875)	Border Towns Men (N=127)	Border Towns Women (N=185)
Speak Navajo	66%	73%	97%	95%
Read Navajo	12	14	42	42
Write Navajo	8	7	19	18
Speak English	94	97	96	99
Read English	94	97	96	98
Write English	94	97	94	98

and related support services. This is evident in the occupational distribution contained in Table 7. This distribution, especially that for the reservation, contains a disportionately high number of professionals, managers, and service

Table 7 about here

workers, and a disportionately low number of individuals employed in industrial jobs. The number of professionals is impressive until it is observed that most of the professionals are public school teachers and teachers aides (see Table 8). The managers are program directors for the BIA or Tribe and not

Table 8 about here

managers of private businesses. The border towns offer greater opportunity for employment in light industry (fabrication workers and operatives), sales work, and domestic work than does the reservation. Importantly there was little change in the type of jobs Navajos had in 1977 as compared to 1970.

An examination of the list of major employers reveals additional information about the types of jobs held by Navajos (see Table 9). The largest employer of Navajos on the reservation was the Bureau of Indian Affairs

Table 9 about here

followed by the Navajo Tribe. When the Indian Health Service and other Federal agencies were also considered, almost eighty percent of the Navajo men and women working on the reservation were employed by agencies delivering services to Navajos. Only one out of five worked for an employer in the private sector. It was anticipated that more Navajo would work for private companies because of the rather extensive energy development on the reservation, most of which included a Navajo hiring preference. Actually, the percentage of Navajos employed in the private sector declined from 1970 to 1977.

We were interested in the match between the education and the jobs of the Navajo respondents to determine whether they were working in the areas

Table 7

OCCUPATIONS OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN WORKING ON AND NEAR THE NAVAJO RESERVATION, 1970 and 1977

Occupation	1970				1977			
	Reservation		Border Towns		Reservation		Border Towns	
	Men (N=329)	Women (N=413)	Men (N=56)	Women (N=81)	Men (N=554)	Women (N=857)	Men (N=125)	Women (N=183)
Professional & Technical Workers	30%	23%	27%	10%	33%	23%	28%	7%
Managers & Officials	11	2	2	2	18	7	2	1
Clerical Workers	7	35	21	34	6	38	15	40
Sales Workers	2	0	5	2	2	1	6	11
Service Workers	16	32	7	31	16	27	14	25
Processing Workers	1	0	7	2	1	0	3	1
Operatives	5	2	4	0	4	1	7	0
Transportation Operatives	7	0	2	0	6	0	5	1
Fabrication Workers	2	3	5	16	2	1	6	13
Structure Workers	19	2	20	2	10	2	13	2
Farming	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Total	101	99	100	100	99	100	100	101

Table 8

THE MOST FREQUENT OCCUPATIONS OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON AND NEAR THE NAVAJO RESERVATION, 1977

Occupations	Navajo Reservation		Border Towns	
	Men (N=554)	Women (N=857)	Men (N=127)	Women (N=189)
Education: Teacher, Teacher's Aid	96	253	3	17
Stenographer, Typist, File Clerk	15	173	8	41
Miscelaneous Managers	54	30	0	0
Sales Person	2	1	6	11
Domestic Workers	0	0	1	13

Table 9

EMPLOYER OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN WORKING ON AND NEAR THE NAVAJO RESERVATION, 1970 & 1977

Employer	1970 Reservation Men (N=297)	1970 Reservation Women (N=383)	1970 Border Towns Men (N=61)	1970 Border Towns Women (N=80)	1977 Reservation Men (N=485)	1977 Reservation Women (N=746)	1977 Border Towns Men (N=119)	1977 Border Towns Women (N=167)
Bureau of Indian Affairs	31%	40%	21%	21%	31%	40%	23%	29%
Navajo Tribe	16	13	5	3	31	27	14	11
Indian Health Service	7	11	13	3	9	9	11	4
Other Federal Government	13	7	3	11	4	4	2	4
City/State Govt	2	1	2	0	1	1	2	0
Self-Employed	2	0	0	1	1	0	2	1
Private Employer	30	28	56	62	22	18	46	51
Total	101	100	100	101	99	99	100	100

they had trained for. A fairly substantial number (71 percent of the men and 81 percent of the women living on the reservation and 72 percent of the men and 70 percent of the women in the border towns) were employed in their chosen or usual occupation. These are fairly high percentages and suggest that the Navajo labor force is engaged in work for which it has been prepared. The study asked those who were employed in a job other than their usual one why this was the case but, unfortunately, the categories used to describe the reasons are not mutually exclusive (see Table 10). All three of the most frequently given reasons involve the unavailability of the desired job.

Table 10 about here

For those living on the reservation and working at a job other than their usual one, the lack of opportunity was apparent. Nearly two-thirds gave one of the three responses listed in Table 10. The "other" category included illness, family responsibility, and ties to the land and the need to watch livestock. Many of these people also indicated that they stay on the reservation and work at a job other than their preference, rather than relocating to obtain employment in their usual occupation. Similar responses were given by those in the border towns who indicated they did not want to move any further from the reservation.

An important employment characteristic was the number of Navajos with a second job. Very few--eight and four percent of men and women respectively living on the reservation, and four and three percent of the men and women living in the border towns--had a second job in 1977. Given the high unemployment in the area, this small number of people with two or more jobs is not suprising.

The scattered settlement patterns characterizing the Navajo reservation raised the issue of how far workers had to travel and the means they used to

Table 10

REASONS WHY NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS WERE NOT WORKING IN PRIMARY OCCUPATIONS IN 1977

Reasons	Navajo Reservation Men (N=135)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=151)	Border Towns Men (N=36)	Border Towns Women (N=61)
Cannot Find Primary Job Anywhere	30%	26%	19%	21%
Cannot Find Primary Job On Reservation	25	17	17	18
I Would Have to Move	14	13	14	5
Other	30	44	50	56
TOTAL	99	100	100	100

ITEM: Why are you not working at your primary occupation?

get to work. Table 11 reveals that those working on the reservation actually lived closer to their employment than did those in border towns. A majority,

Table 11 about here

74 percent and 81 percent, of the men and the women on the reservation traveled ten miles or less to work. Comparable percentages for those in the border towns were 66 and 71 percent. This modest, but significant, difference suggests that perhaps some Navajos have relocated to the border towns for access to community services even though they have to commute a little further to work. There are several individuals who reported that they lived in a border town and commuted back to the reservation each day to work because of housing, shopping, recreation, etc. available in town. Overall, distance did not appear to be a problem for those who had jobs either on the reservation or in nearby towns. Either they obtained a job close to their home, or else they relocated near the work.

Table 12 shows that most employed Navajos drove their own cars or trucks to work. Work was so close on the reservations that one out of five workers

Table 12 about here

simply walked to their job. Car pools were the means used by a sizeable number of respondents. It is not surprising that public transportation was utuilized by so few as not much was or is available in the area.

A frequently mentioned criticism of Indian employees is a high rate of turnover. Table 13 strongly refutes this stereotype as very few employees

Table 13 about here

had worked at their job less than a year. This was true for both those employed on the reservation and in the border towns. The most frequently reported job tenure was one or two years, and substantial numbers had had their jobs five and even ten years. The data in this table describe a reasonably stable labor force.

Table 11

THE DISTANCE TRAVELED TO WORK EACH DAY BY NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS IN 1977

Distance	Navajo Reservation		Border Towns	
	Men (N=580)	Women (N=873)	Men (N=127)	Women (N=189)
Less than 1 mile	20%	20%	2%	3%
1 to 10 miles	54	61	64	68
11 to 20 miles	8	9	15	13
Over 20 miles	18	11	20	16
Total	100	101	101	100

ITEM: What is your daily one-way distance to your job?

Table 12

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS, 1977

Transportation	Navajo Reservation		Border Towns	
	Men (N=582)	Women (N=875)	Men (N=127)	Women (N=185)
Own Car	66%	67%	77%	78%
Walk	27	25	12	11
Ride with others	6	14	12	15
Public Transportation	1	1	0	2
Hitch hike	2	11	4	0
Others	3	1	1	1
TOTALS	105*	119*	106*	106*

*Total greater than 100% because some respondents reported more than one means of transportation.

ITEM: How do you get to work?

Table 13

TIME EMPLOYED NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN HAVE WORKED AT THEIR JOBS ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS IN 1977

Time Employed	Navajo Reservation Men (N=579)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=864)	Border Towns Men (N=127)	Border Towns Women (N=185)
Less than 1 year	6%	8%	2%	0%
1 to 2 years	44	42	47	56
3 to 5 years	22	22	27	27
6 to 10 years	16	16	17	12
11 to 20 years	8	8	4	4
Over 20 years	5	5	4	1
TOTAL	101	101	101	100

ITEM: How long have you worked at your current job?

The income earned by employed Navajos in 1977 is presented in Table 14. It was anticipated that the income on the reservation would be lower than that

Table 14 about here

which might be projected given the occupational distribution. Remember that the professionals on the reservation were not doctors, lawyers, dentists, and similar high income individuals, but rather were teachers and teachers aides who earned rather modest incomes. What we didn't expect and cannot account for is the 17 percent on the reservation who reported "no" income. These men and women were employed full-time in non-agricultural jobs and most had held their position for the entire year. They should have had an income. Undoubtedly, some of the "no income" respondents were individuals who refused to report how much they made, but those in the border towns were probably just as suspicious and only 1 and 4 percent of them reported "no income." It appears that there were some reservation residents who claimed to have worked full-time and earned no income. The income distribution for those working in border towns is more normal. A few had very low incomes, a few had very high incomes (all men), and most were in the middle income range.

In summary, the employed Navajo labor force is a fairly stable one. It is comprised of men and women with reasonably good education and training. The extensive employment in Indian agencies as compared to the private sector points out the failure of attracting industry to the reservation. Navajos work for the BIA and the Tribe because these agencies have the jobs. It is important to recall that Navajo workers appear to be quite similar to their counterparts in the larger society. If more varied job opportunities could be created on the reservation, the data suggest that the Navajo have the skills, and the abilities to adjust and become valued employees.

Table 14

INCOME OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS IN 1977

Income	Navajo Reservation		Border Towns	
	Men (N=581)	Women (N=874)	Men (N=116)	Women (N=158)
None	17%	17%	1%	4%
$1 to $5,000	12	24	21	39
$5,001 to $10,000	33	41	46	50
$10,001 to $15,000	23	13	24	7
$15,001 to $20,000	11	3	6	0
Over $20,000	5	1	3	0
TOTAL	101	99	101	100

Attitudes Towards Upgrading Occupational Skills and Opportunities. As reported in the previous section, most of the Navajo employed on the reservation and the surrounding border towns in 1977 were working at their primary occupation. In addition, most had been employed in their current position for a year or longer. Nevertheless, we were interested in how many employed Navajo would like to learn a new skill in order to get a better or more desirable job. A majority of the men (59 percent) and women (69 percent) employed on the reservation responded that they would like to learn a new skill. A similar number, 66 percent of the men working in the border towns also desired upgrading their occupational skills. For some reason, only 17 percent of the women in the border towns had a similar desire. These women were either very happy in their current job or else already had the qualifications necessary for the job they desired. With the exception of the border town women, the employed Navajo displayed a strong desire for upward occupational mobility.

The specific occupations individuals identified as what they would like to learn are presented in Table 15. Interestingly, men desired training for

Table 15 about here

occupations with limited job opportunities on the reservation. Heavy equipment operation, auto mechanics, and welding are occupations found primarily in the private sector of the economy and, as noted in the previous section, only a limited number of Navajos worked at such jobs. It is doubtful that there was a demand for their skills at the time the desires to have them were expressed. There is a very old joke about the BIA's Adult Vocational Training (AVT) program training Navajo welders in vocational schools in San Francisco, Portland and Seattle as there is very little ship building on the Navajo reservation. Nevertheless, a sizeable number of men indicated

Table 15

JOB SKILLS MOST FREQUENTLY DESIRED BY NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS IN 1977

Job Skills	Navajo Reservation		Border Towns	
	Men (N=304)	Women (N=533)	Men (N=72)	Women (N=138)
Heavy Equipment Operatives	25	3	4	0
Auto Mechanics	23	2	8	1
Welding	22	0	2	0
Teaching	20	107	1	21
Secretarial Work	3	84	1	28
Social Work	16	55	4	9
Accounting	16	50	4	9
Nursing	1	53	0	5
	126*	354*	24*	73*

*Totals do not equal 'Ns" because only selected occupations are included.

ITEM: What occupation would you like to learn?

that they would like to learn to weld. Perhaps they would then migrate to the ship yards located on the west coast.

A large number of men and women recognize the job market in education on the reservation and wanted to prepare to participate in it. Secretarial work, social work, and accounting are skills that are in demand by the BIA, Tribe, and other government agencies and would equip the individual for the available job market.

It is important to recognize the achievement motive, the drive for upward mobility, expressed by these employed Navajo. Frequently, the Navajo are stereotyped as having little achievement drive, but such is not the case with the individuals in these two samples.

Another significant component of upward mobility in American society is the willingness to follow the job market and relocate near areas of economic growth. The Navajo have been characterized as being bound to the reservation by strong cultural and family ties which prevent their seeking employment out of the area. To assess the accuracy of this stereotype, four questions were asked about the respondent's willingness to commute, move or relocate. The first asked about commuting to another agency or border area; the second about relocating away from home and returning on weekends; the third about moving to another agency or border area; and the fourth about moving with one's family off the reservation. The results are presented in Table 16 and reveal strong support for commuting, both to jobs a long distance as well as to those closer to home. Less support was reported for moving to another area. But, nearly one half of the respondents reported that they would be willing to move to find a better job. The strongest hesitancy to move was expressed by the border town women as only 37 percent said they would move to another agency.

Table 16 about here

Table 16

WILLINGNESS OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS IN 1977 TO RELOCATE INORDER TO OBTAIN A BETTER OR MORE DESIRABLE JOB

Type of Relocation	Percent Willing to Relocate			
	Navajo Reservation		Border Towns	
	Men (N=565)	Women (N=845)	Men (N=123)	Women (N=180)
Commute to another agency or border area	68%	67%	51%	63%
Relocate away from home, return on weekend	55%	53%	43%	56%
Move to another agency or border area	46%	45%	47%	37%
Move off reservation, take family	48%	45%	51%	43%

ITEMS: Would you commute more to another agency on the Navajo Nation or border area if a better or more desirable job were available?

Would you be willing to move to accept a better or more desirable job if you could live near your work during the week and return home on weekends?

Would you move your household goods/family to a location outside of the Navajo Nation and border areas if a better or more desirable job were available?

Those who did not want to commute, move, or relocate were asked the reasons why. The results for commuting or moving to another agency appear in Table 17 and for relocating off the reservation in Table 18. The most frequent response

Tables 17 and 18 about here

was a simple "I don't want to" without any further detail. A similar response of "jobs too far away" was noted by about 15 percent of the respondents. It is not possible to guess the "real" reasons behind these responses. Among specific responses, family ties and responsibilities were listed by one fourth of the individuals as the reason why they preferred not to move, even though better employment was available elsewhere. The need to cultivate the land or tend livestock was mentioned by approximately 10 percent of the men and somewhat fewer women as their reason for remaining on the reservation. Lack of transportation and illness were responsible for only a few opting not to seek better employment opportunities out of the area.

In sum, the strong desire for upward occupational mobility expressed by these employed Navajo should be noted. These men and women had steady jobs, and yet a majority reported that they would like additional job training and also would be willing to commute or move to find a better job. Those responsible for development on the reservation have a potentially willing labor force in the local residents who desire the opportunity to upgrade their skills and employment.

Characteristics of Unemployed Navajos

In this section we will briefly describe some of the more important characteristics of the unemployed Navajos in the reservation and border town samples. As is evident from Table 19, the unemployed tend to be concentrated in the younger age groups (of course, this is descriptive of the Navajo population as a whole, though not to the degree indicated in the table).

Table 17

REASONS WHY NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS WOULD NOT MOVE OR COMMUTE TO ANOTHER AGENCY IN 1977

Reason	Navajo Reservation				Border Towns			
	Move to another agency		Commute to another agency		Move to another agency		Commute to another agency	
	Men (N=409)	Women (N=533)	Men (N=519)	Women (N=770)	Men (N=78)	Women (N=84)	Men (N=89)	Women (N=151)
Don't want to	36%	40%	41%	37%	36%	38%	44%	36%
Family	21	24	19	20	21	30	18	9
Land	15	10	--	--	8	6	--	--
Livestock	9	5	5	4	8	3	4	1
Jobs too far away	8	7	19	21	10	10	17	30
No transportation	2	4	5	8	1	6	9	17
Illness	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
Other	8	10	10	10	17	8	7	7
Total	100	101	100	101	101	101	100	101

ITEM: Why would you not commute (move)?

Table 18

REASONS WHY NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN EMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS WOULD NOT RELOCATE OFF THE RESERVATION IN 1977

Reason	Navajo Reservation Men (N=439)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=598)	Border Towns Men (N=91)	Border Towns Women (N=107)
Don't want to	34%	37%	38%	40%
Family	23	25	21	24
Land	14	10	5	7
Livestock	12	6	7	5
Jobs too far away	11	9	15	13
No transportation	3	4	3	3
Illness	1	0	2	1
Other	3	8	8	7
TOTAL	101	99	99	100

ITEM: Why would you not move?

Fully 76 percent of the men residing on the reservation who are unemployed are in the 16 to 35 age category. This is true of 83 percent of the unemployed women residing on the reservation. In 1982, approximately 38 percent of the total Navajo labor force was in the 16-25 age group. Many of the older Navajos are not listed as unemployed because of their involvement with traditional agricultural activities.

Table 19 About Here

The percentage of the unemployed in the youngest age group (16-25) is much higher on the reservation than in the border towns. While over half of the unemployed females residing on the reservation are in this age group, this is true of less than one-third (32 percent) of those living in the border towns. In the border towns the unemployed, both male and female, tend to be concentrated in the 26-35 age category.

Comparisons among the samples reveals no significant differences in marital status. About one half of each of the groups of unemployed (both men and women and both reservation and border town dwellers) are married. Unemployed Navajo men living on the reservation are more likely to be single than is true of any of the other sample categories. Only small numbers of any of the groups are separated, divorced or widowed, though divorced or separated men are twice as frequent among the unemployed in border towns as on the reservation.

If we compare the unemployed with the employed, there are significant differences between the employed and unemployed men. About three-fourths of the employed men are married, and that figure rises to over 80 percent or more if the separated and divorced men are included. Among the unemployed men, on the other hand, about 40 percent are single, and about half are presently married.

Table 20 about here

Table 19

AGE OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN UNEMPLOYED ON
THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS

Age Category	Navajo Reservation Men (N=1093)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=761)	Border Towns Men (N=229)	Border Towns Women (N=200)
16 to 25	41%	53%	31%	32%
26 to 35	35	30	45	46
36 to 45	16	13	15	12
46 to 55	6	3	6	6
Over 55	2	1	3	4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Table 20

MARITAL STATUS OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN UNEMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS

Marital Status	Navajo Reservation Men (N=1084)	Navajo Reservation Women (N=764)	Border Towns Men (N=229)	Border Towns Women (N=202)
Single	42%	34%	38%	31%
Married	52	52	48	52
Separated	3	7	6	6
Divorced	2	4	7	4
Widowed	1	3	1	6
TOTAL	100	100	100	99

One of the conventional statements about Indians and education is that young people go away and get an education, then return home and find that their education has no particular value on the reservation--there are no jobs there--and if they are to profit from their advanced education they must leave the reservation. That kind of reasoning may apply to some tribes, but as can be seen from Table 21, it does not describe the Navajo situation very well. There is a strong and dramatic link between education and employability, both on the Navajo Nation and in the border towns, but especially on the Navajo Nation.

Fifty-nine percent of the unemployed men, and 55 percent of the unemployed women on the Navajo Nation have not completed high school. In the border town samples the same pattern appears, though not so dramatically: 40 percent of the unemployed men and 51 percent of the unemployed women in the border towns have not finished high school, compared to less than half that proportion of the employed (18 percent of men, 22 percent of women).

Table 21 about here

Also, the likelihood that educated Navajos will <u>not</u> be unemployed, either on the Navajo Nation or in border towns, is even more striking when we look at college education, with or without completion of a degree. Six percent of the unemployed Navajo men on the reservation had some college, compared to six times that many among <u>employed</u> men; the ratio is about the same for women on the Navajo Nation. And in the border towns, only about one out of eight of the unemployed of either gender have some college or a two- to four-year college degree, compared to one-third of the employed men and one-fourth of the employed women. It is apparent that on the Navajo Nation, at least, possession of an advanced degree is a virtual guarantee that one will have a job of some kind, a far better guarantee, incidentally,

Table 21

EDUCATION OF NAVAJO MEN AND WOMEN UNEMPLOYED ON THE NAVAJO RESERVATION AND NEARBY BORDER TOWNS

Education	Navajo Reservation		Border Towns	
	Men (N=1074)	Women (N=754)	Men (N=229)	Women (N=199)
Less than high school	33%	25%	17%	27%
Some high school	26	30	23	24
High school graduate	25	29	33	29
Some college	5	7	7	11
College graduate	1	1	4	2
Advanced degree	--	--	--	--
Post-secondary vocational training	9	7	11	7
Military school	1	0	4	0
	100	99	99	100

than is the possession of vocational education of some kind; Navajo males with vocational education are as likely to be in the unemployed as the employed samples. For women, on the other hand, the vocational education seems more readily translatable into jobs: Among the employed, women with vocational education appeared twice as often (about one-sixth of all employed women) as they do among the unemployed.

Education may be related to having a job among all of the samples studied. Whether the job is related to the kind of education received is another question, and one that applies to the general U.S. population as well as the Navajo.

In terms of other background characteristics, the unemployed Navajos are not significantly different than the employed Navajos. That is, they tend to have similar family sizes, they are about as likely to have an ability to speak and read English, and so on. And, as we shall see in the next section, they tend to be as interested in working as are those who are currently employed.

Attitudes of the Unemployed On and Near the Navajo Nation. Previous sections of this report have examined the basic socio-demographic characteristics of the unemployed respondents that were interviewed as part of the Navajo Labor Survey. In this section we will focus on some of the most important attitudinal questions that were directed to the unemployed--both those living on and those living near the Navajo Nation. Specifically, we will examine employment desires and preferences and willingness of the respondents to commute or migrate either for employment or for job training programs.

Willingness to Work. Popular stereotypes about the Navajo people sometimes argue that large proportions of the unemployed Navajos do not work simply because they do not want to work, at least in the types of occupations that are most likely to be found with the increased industrialization and development of energy resources on or near the reservation. Responses summarized in Table 22 suggest that this simply is not true. Fully 98 percent of the unemployed Navajo males living on the reservation indicated that they would like to work. This was also true of 95 percent of the unemployed Navajo women living on the reservation. The percentage of those desiring work who live in the border towns was somewhat lower--81 percent of the unemployed males and 72 percent of the unemployed females. Nevertheless, the results indicate a very large pool of unemployed Navajos who would like to have employment if it were available.

Table 22 about here

Most respondents in the survey were willing to work during all parts of the year. Ninety-seven percent of the reservation residents (both male and female) indicated that they would be willing to work during all parts of the year and the figure for border town residents was almost as high (93 percent of the males and 88 percent of the females). In addition, and perhaps contrary to some popular stereotypes, most of the unemployed Navajos expressed preference for a traditional 40 hour work week. When asked how many hours per week they would be willing to work, 96 percent of the on-reservation males and 97 percent of the on-reservation females reported that they would like to work a 40 hour week. Most of the remainder expressed a willingness to work more than 40 hours per week. The figures were slightly lower for the off-reservation respondents. In this case,

Table 22

WILLINGNESS TO WORK AMONG THE UNEMPLOYED

Want to Work	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No	27	2	39	5	43	19	56	28
Yes	1067	98	724	95	184	81	147	72
Total	1094	100	763	100	227	100	203	100

87 percent of the males and 81 percent of the females were willing to work a 40 hour week. More females living in the border towns expressed a preference for part-time work.

Table 23 about here

Not only would the unemployed like to work but a substantial percentage of them are actively involved in looking for employment. Ninety percent of the unemployed Navajo males living on the reservation indicated that they had been looking for a job. The percentage of unemployed border town males and of females both on and off the reservation looking for work was somewhat lower but between two-thirds and three-fourths of the members of these groups have also been actively seeking employment (see Table 24).

Table 24 about here

A majority of respondents had been actively seeking work for less than six months (between 56 and 84 percent of the different groups). However, 70 to 30 percent had been looking for a job for between six months and a year and a number had been looking even longer. The relatively short period of job hunting reported by a majority of respondents is, in part, a reflection of the temporary nature of many of the jobs that become available on and near the reservation. A person might be employed for a few weeks, then be layed off, then find another short-term job, and so on. The result is that at any particular point in time, one will be able to locate a substantial number of unemployed Navajos who have been out of work <u>from their latest job</u> for under six months or a year.

Table 23

NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK UNEMPLOYED WOULD WORK

Hours per week	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Less than 40	8	1	9	1	11	5	17	13
40	1017	96	694	97	156	87	110	81
40+	36	3	11	2	13	7	2	1
Total	1061	100	713	100	180	99	136	100

Table 24

NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED ACTIVELY SEEKING WORK

Looking for Work	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No	102	10	220	32	43	24	50	36
Yes	909	90	478	68	139	76	90	64
Total	1011	100	698	100	182	100	140	100

Table 25 about here

Barriers to Finding Employment. Unemployed respondents identified a number of reasons why they feel they have not been able to find employment. These are listed in Table 26. For unemployed males, the most critical reason for unemployment was simply the absence of jobs. Of the males who are unemployed on the Navajo Nation, 36 percent said that the major reason they could not find work was that there simply were not jobs available. Forty-one percent of the unemployed males living in the border towns said that the major reason they had not found work was that there were no jobs. The next most important reason given by the male respondents, both on and off the reservation, was that they lacked the skills and/or education that were needed to obtain a job. The only other factor that received fairly frequent mention was that of distance--when jobs became available, they were too far away. Since many of the respondents lacked a dependable mode of transportation, this constituted an important barrier to steady employment.

Table 26 about here

The primary reasons identified for not having found work by unemployed female respondents living on the reservation were somewhat different than for males. For example, these women were more likely to emphasize their lack of skills or education than were males. They were also more likely to emphasize travel problems. Unemployed women living in the border towns, like the border town men, felt that the primary barrier was simply an absence of jobs.

The relatively small percentage of those who indicated that they did not want a job were asked to identify the reason why. For male respondents, both

Table 25

LENGTH OF TIME UNEMPLOYED HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR WORK

Time	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
1-6 months	613	64	276	56	112	79	76	84
6-12 months	242	25	147	30	14	10	11	12
1-2 years	75	8	54	11	11	8	2	2
2-3 years	16	2	7	1	2	1	0	0
3-4 years	4	0	4	1	1	1	0	0
4-5 years	5	1	0	0	2	1	0	0
5+ years	6	1	5	1	0	0	1	1
Total	961	101	493	99	142	100	90	99

Table 26

MAJOR REASONS UNEMPLOYED HAVE NOT FOUND WORK

Reasons	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No jobs	688	36	30	4	88	41	56	44
No jobs on Navajo nation	493	26	219	32	0	0	0	0
Lack of skills and/or education	378	20	204	30	72	34	37	29
Can only work certain days and/or hours	15	1	17	2	9	4	12	9
Jobs too far from home	160	9	79	11	18	8	5	4
Jobs too low pay	30	2	25	4	3	1	4	3
Don't know how to look for a job	6	0	9	1	5	2	0	0
Other	131	7	108	16	19	9	14	11
Total	1901	101	691	99	214	99	128	100

on and off the reservation, the primary reason given was that they were unable to work because of some type of illness or disability. In addition, a number of males living on the reservation identified family-related responsibilities that kept them from seeking work or reported that they could not work because of their responsibilities for their livestock and sheep.

Table 27 about here

Unemployed female respondents who were not seeking work attributed this primarily to their family responsibilities. This was true of 39 percent of the women living on the reservation and 37 percent of those living in the border towns. Very few of the respondents indicated that they didn't want a job because they didn't need a job.

Willingness to Move to Find Employment. A number of questions were asked the respondents to determine their willingness to relocate in order to obtain employment. In general, these questions indicate a general willingness on the part of a majority of respondents to move, if necessary, in order to obtain work. Reservation dwellers were asked if they would be willing to move off the reservation to accept a job. As the figures in Table 28 indicate, 78 percent of the unemployed male respondents and 64 percent of the unemployed female respondents would be willing to so move. Off-reservation respondents were even more willing to be mobile to obtain work (see Table 29). Eighty-five percent of the unemployed male respondents living in border town areas would be willing to move onto the Navajo Nation or to another border area to accept a job. This was true of 69 percent of the unemployed female respondents who lived off the reservation.

Tables 28 and 29 about here

It is interesting to note that respondents were generally more willing to move than to commute in order to obtain jobs (see Table 30). When asked if

Table 27

REASONS UNEMPLOYED DON'T WANT A JOB

Reasons	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Don't need a job	1	3	2	4	4	6	8	10
No transportation available	4	11	3	6	6	9	1	1
No jobs here	2	5	4	7	6	9	3	4
Illness and/or disability	14	37	8	15	15	23	7	9
Family	6	16	21	39	6	9	30	37
Sheep-herding/ livestock	7	18	2	4	4	6	6	7
Land	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1
Other	3	8	14	26	24	37	26	32
Total	38	101	54	101	65	99	82	101

Table 28

WILLINGNESS TO MOVE OFF RESERVATION FOR A JOB, RESERVATION RESIDENTS

Willingness to Move	Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%
No	227	22	251	36
Yes	814	78	451	64
Total	1041	100	702	100

Table 29

WILLINGNESS TO MOVE TO THE NAVAJO NATION
AND/OR ANOTHER BORDER AREA TO ACCEPT A JOB, BORDER TOWN RESIDENTS

Willingness to Move	Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%
No	19	15	26	31
Yes	112	85	58	69
Total	131	100	84	100

they would be willing to commute from their present residence to another part of the Navajo Nation or to a border area to obtain work, fewer than two-thirds of any group of respondents answered in the affirmative. Sixty-three percent of the unemployed males residing on the reservation would be willing to commute. However, this was true of just 51 percent of the off-reservation males and of 48 and 32 percent of the on- and off-reservation females. It seems apparent that these figures are a function of the tremendous distances that are involved. For example, if a Navajo worker was to live in one border town and commute to another for employment, the roundtrip travel distance would often be much greater than 100 miles. As a consequence, commuting is often not a viable alternative for those seeking employment.

Table 30 about here

A more attractive alternative for many respondents was to be able to live near their work during the week and then be able to return to their home on weekends (see Table 31). Ninety percent of the male respondents living on the Navajo Nation reported that they would be willing to move to accept a job if they could live near their work during the week and return home on weekends. Over three-fourths of the female respondents living on the reservation also responded affirmatively on this question. Non-reservation residents were more reluctant to live away from their homes during the week for employment. Two-thirds of the male respondents but just 40 percent of the female respondents reported they would accept such an arrangement.

Table 31 about here

A final question of this type asked the respondents if they would be willing to move their household goods and/or families in order to accept a job. Over two-thirds of the unemployed living on the Navajo Nation indicated that they would be willing to do so, both male and female. Those living in

Table 30

IF A JOB WERE AVAILABLE IN ANOTHER PART OF THE NAVAJO NATION OR BORDER AREA, WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO COMMUTE TO THAT JOB FROM YOUR CURRENT RESIDENCE

Willingness to Commute	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No	386	37	373	52	89	49	96	68
Yes	659	63	340	48	94	51	45	32
Total	1045	100	713	100	183	100	141	100

Table 31

WILLINGNESS TO MOVE TO ACCEPT A BETTER OR MORE DESIRABLE JOB IF COULD LIVE NEAR WORK DURING THE WEEK AND RETURN HOME ON WEEKENDS

	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No	99	10	165	23	58	33	84	60
Yes	932	90	542	77	119	67	57	40
Total	1031	100	707	100	177	100	141	100

the border towns were somewhat more reluctant to move household and family, particularly the female respondents.

Table 32 about here

Willingness to Participate in a Jobs Training Program. Not only were the unemployed Navajo respondents generally willing to move in order to obtain employment, a significant majority indicated a willingness to participate in a program that would teach them a skill designed to enable them to find employment, even if participating in such a program might also require moving or commuting. As Table 33 indicates, 94 percent of the male respondents living on the reservation expressed a willingness to participate in a jobs training program and even more women (97 percent of the unemployed women living on the reservation) expressed such an interest. Off-reservation residents responded somewhat less favorably to participation in a jobs skill training program but even in this case, 78 percent of the male respondents and 79 percent of the female respondents stated that they would participate in a training program.

Table 33 about here

When asked what they would be willing to do in order to participate in a jobs training program, most respondents indicated that they would make substantial sacrifices. For example, a large majority of respondents would be willing to move to participate in such a program (see Table 34). This was ture of almost 90 percent of the male respondents, both on and off the reservation. Eighty-four percent of the unemployed female respondents living on the reservation and 67 percent of those living in the border towns also indicated a willingness to move for job training.

Table 34 about here

Table 32

WILLINGNESS TO MOVE HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND/OR FAMILY TO ACCEPT A JOB

Willingness to move household or family	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No	289	27	223	31	63	35	75	54
Yes	767	73	492	69	117	65	65	46
Total	1056	100	715	100	180	100	140	100

Table 33

WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN A PROGRAM TO LEARN A SKILL THAT WOULD ENABLE RESPONDENT TO FIND EMPLOYMENT

Learn a skill	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No	63	6	19	3	40	22	30	21
Yes	1001	94	699	97	142	78	113	79
Total	1064	100	718	100	182	100	143	100

Table 34

WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN A JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

Willingness to move	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No	107	11	115	16	17	12	37	33
Yes	889	89	583	84	124	88	75	67
Total	996	100	698	100	141	100	112	100

Generally, the respondents were also willing to accept other alternatives that would significantly disrupt current living patterns in order to obtain job training. Almost 90 percent of the male respondents and about three-fourths of the female respondents reported that they would be willing to live in dormitory facilities without their families for up to three months in order to receive job training (see Table 35). In addition, about three-fourths of the male respondents and somewhat fewer of the female respondents reported that they would commute on a daily basis for job training. On-reservation residents were more willing to commute than were residents of the border towns. However, again, the greater reluctance to commute than to actually move may be largely a reflection of both the distances that are often required when one commutes and the lack of dependable modes of transportation available for many of the respondents. It is often easier to move one's family than to commute on the reservation.

Table 35 and 36 about here

Employment and Migration Histor

The interview schedules contained several items on former residential location and former employment status. Three specific reference points were used for employment status, 1970 and 1975. For migration history, 1960, 1970 and 1975 were all used as reference points for assessing place of residence and migration to or from the Navajo Nation.

Aspects of Employment History. The figures in Table 37 suggest that most of the men and women on the Navajo Nation who were working at the time of the interview also were employed in 1975 and 1970, or if not employed, were students.

Table 37 about here

Only ten percent of the employed men and 14 percent of the employed women were not also employed seven years prior to being interviewed. In other words,

Table 35

WILLINGNESS TO LIVE IN DORMITORY FACILITIES
WITHOUT FAMILY FOR UP TO THREE MONTHS

Willingness to live away from family	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No	118	13	166	27	8	6	19	26
Yes	821	87	446	73	116	94	55	74
Total	939	100	612	100	124	100	74	100

Table 36

WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

Commute to job training program	Unemployed on Navajo Nation				Unemployed near Navajo Nation			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No	207	21	189	27	48	34	44	40
Yes	789	79	514	73	94	66	66	60
Total	996	100	703	100	142	100	110	100

TABLE 37

EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN 1970 AND 1975, BY GENDER AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN 1977, NAVAJO NATION AND BORDERTOWNS

	Navajo Nation				Border Towns			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
Worked	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.
1975								
No	5%	26%	7%	46%	8%	28%	12%	49%
Yes	87	63	79	37	86	57	73	30
Student	8	11	14	17	6	15	15	21
(N)	(578)	(1102)	(870)	(757)	(127)	(228)	(182)	(203)
1970								
No	10%	23%	14%	35%	15%	26%	16%	45%
Yes	63	42	50	24	52	36	45	22
Students	27	36	36	40	33	38	39	33
(N)	(579)	(1081)	(869)	(743)	(124)	(225)	(183)	(201)

Item: Did you work in 1975?
Did you work in 1970?

for the men and women on the Navajo Nation who had jobs in 1977, most also had jobs or were in school in 1975 and 1970. In contrast, the significantly fewer of the unemployed men (63 percent, compared to 87 percent of the employed men) were employed in 1975, and far fewer in 1970. These comparisons suggest that unemployment on the Navajo Nation tends to be fairly consistent in that persons unemployed at one point are overrepresented among the unemployed at another time. This pattern is especially apparent for women on the Navajo Nation. Only one-third of the women unemployed in 1977 were employed in 1975, and only one-fourth had been employed in 1970.

The figures for past employment among border town respondents reveal essentially the same pattern: most men and women employed in 1977 were also employed or in school in 1975 and 1970. The apparent continuity of employment is slightly less evident in the border towns--for example, 52 percent of employed men in 1977 said they worked in 1970, compared to 63 percent among men on the Navajo Nation.

Also, continuity in employment, both on the Navajo Nation and in the border towns, is more evident among men than women. Women employed in 1977 were consistently less likely than their male counterparts to have worked in 1975 or 1970.

Classifications of type of employer for jobs held in 1970 and 1975 (see Table 38) reveal the dominance of tribal, BIA or other government employers

Table 38 about here

in both 1975 and 1970, but there is a clear trend, especially when the percentages in Table 38 are compared with those for 1977 (see Table 9), toward an increasing proportion of the Navajo Nation workers to be employed by the selected governmental employers shown in Table 38. For example, this set of six categories of employers accounted for 79 percent of the jobs of employed men in 1975, compared to 71 percent in 1970. The same trend toward increasing proportions of the

Table 38

SELECTED EMPLOYER CLASSIFICATIONS, 1970 and 1975
BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND GENDER, FOR
FOR NAVAJO NATIONS AND BORDER TOWNS,
1977

Employer	On Navajo Nation				Border Towns			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
assification, 1975	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.
overnment	6%	3%	6%	3%	13%	7%	5%	8%
vajo Tribe	22	22	16	11	3	6	8	7
reau of Indian Affairs	30	4	35	9	21	5	23	3
ublic Health Service	6	1	9	4	1	2	2	0
ty or State Government	1	1	2	2	10	4	2	2
ucational Institutions	13	1	12	4	5	5	5	5
otal, above employers	79%	32%	79%	33%	52%	29%	45%	25%
umber of cases (N) all employers	(472)	(676)	(662)	(270)	(107)	(128)	(132)	(59)
Employer assification,1970								
overnment	11%	5%	6%	2%	13%	7%	2%	8%
avajo Tribe	14	18	11	8	3	6	10	7
reau of Indian Affairs	27	5	37	7	20	5	20	3
blic Health Service	6	-	10	2	2	2	0	0
ity or State Government	2	1	1	1	5	4	2	2
ucational Institutions	10	1	8	8	2	5	4	5
otal, above employers	71%	31%	74%	28%	44%	29%	38%	25%
mber of Cases (N) all employers	(334)	(430)	(421)	(170)	(61)	(128)	(81)	(59)

TEM: Please list your job experience during 1975 and 1970: Employer(Industry)_____.

total employed work force employed by these few major employers appears for Navajo Nation women, and for both men and women in the border towns. This point can be illustrated by reference to presently employed women in the border towns: in 1975, 40 percent of them worked for "government," the Tribe, the BIA, the Public Health Service, or city/state government; the comparable percentage in 1970 was 34 percent.

The percentages in Table 38 also reveal the former employers of persons without work in 1977. On the Navajo Nation, without exception, the former employer of persons of both sexes unemployed in 1977 was the Navajo tribe. Twenty-two percent of the men unemployed in 1977 had been tribal employees in 1975, and 18 percent had been tribal employess in 1970. In the border towns, persons unemployed in 1977 were fairly evenly distributed among the six former employer classifications in 1975 and 1970, but, again without exception, the highest proportion of currently unemployed were those who had formerly been employed by "government," or by the Navajo Nation.

Migration History. The responses to questions about movement to and from the Navajo Nation, and about residential migration in general, reveal substantial mobility among both residents of border towns and the Navajo Nation. Reponses to the question, "Did you move between 1970 and now?" shown in Table 39 reveal the highest rates of migration among unemployed men and women in the border towns.

Table 39 about here

Almost two-thirds of the men unemployed in 1977 and 56 percent of the women unemployed in 1977 said that they had moved since 1970. These rates of migration are much higher than for unemployed persons on the Navajo Nation; for example, only about one-third of the men unemployed on the Navajo Nation in 1977 said they nad moved in the past seven years, compared to almost two-thirds of the men in the border towns. It may be that many of the unemployed persons in the border

Table 39

GROSS RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY, 1970-77,
BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND GENDER FOR THE
NAVAJO NATION AND BORDER TOWNS, 1977

	Navajo Nation				Border Towns			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.
"Did you move between 1970 and now?"								
Yes	48%	34%	52%	38%	48%	64%	47%	56%
Number of Cases (N)	(567)	(1064)	(851)	(745)	(124)	(226)	(178)	(201)

towns are those who have moved there, among other places, in search of work, and hence among the unemployed in border towns there are higher percentages of migrations than among those who have remained on the reservation. In any case, the pattern applies to both men and women: 38 percent of the women on the Navajo Nation who were unemployed at the time of the survey said they had moved in the past seven years, compared to 56 percent of the women unemployed at the time of the survey who resided in the border towns.

Among persons employed at the time of the survey, there were no significant differences either by gender or by place of residence in rate of migration. About half of employed men and women, both on the Navajo Nation and in border towns, said they had changed residences at least once in the past seven years.

Details about volume of migration to and from the Navajo Nation over a 17-year period beginning in 1960 are shown in Table 40. They reveal that among

Table 40 about here

persons employed in 1977 on the Navajo Nation, for both men and women, higher proportions had lived off the Navajo Nation at some point in the past 17 years than is the case for the unemployed. The differences are largest for women: unemployed women on the Navajo Nation are much less likely to have lived off the Navajo Nation (42 percent) than are employed women (58 percent), but the difference is significant for men as well (58 percent of employed men on Navajo Nation had lived off the Navajo Nation at some time, compared to 50 percent of the unemployed men). It is likely that some of the off-reservation migration for these people was for educational purposes. In any case, having lived off the Navajo Nation for a period clearly raised the probability that a respondent on the Navajo Nation would be employed in 1977.

Among respondents in border towns the situation is reversed, with persons who had lived on the Navajo Nation at some point during the past 17 years less

Table 40

NET RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY DURING THE PAST 17 YEARS: PERCENTAGES OF NAVAJO NATION RESPONDENTS THAT HAVE LIVED OFF THE NAVAJO NATION AT SOME TIME SINCE 1960, AND OF BORDER TOWN RESPONDENTS THAT HAVE LIVED ON THE NAVAJO NATION AT SOME TIME SINCE 1960, BY PRESENT (1977) EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND GENDER

	NAVAJO NATION			
	Men		Women	
	Employed	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed
Lived off Navajo Nation at some time since 1960	58%	50%	58%	42%
Number of cases (N)	(425)	(1084)	(722)	(758)

	BORDER TOWNS			
Lived on Navajo Nation at some time since 1960	63%	77%	70%	75%
Number of cases (N)	(62)	(227)	(102)	(198)

ITEMS: Navajo Nation Residents: Have you lived off the Navajo Nation at any time 1960: Border town residents: Have you lived on the Navajo Nation any time since 1960?

likely to be employed at the time of the interview than were persons who had not lived on the Navajo Nation during that period. The differences between employed and unemployed women in the border towns in having lived on the Navajo Nation for some period are not statistically significant, but for the men the difference is substantial. Having lived on the Navajo Nation reduces the likelihood that a male respondent was employed when interviewed in a border town in 1977. In summary, both panels of Table 40 support the conclusion that a period of residence off the Navajo Nation, whether for formal education or for other reasons, increased the likelihood that the respondent would be among the employed in 1977.

Table 41 compares employment rates for respondents who lived on the Navajo Nation in 1970 and 1975. On the Navajo Nation, whether one lived on the Navajo

Table 41 about here

Nation in 1970 or in 1975 has very little effect on whether one was employed in 1977. At least three-fourths of everyone, employed or unemployed, who was interviewed on the Navajo Nation in 1977 lived there in 1970, and at least 89 percent of everyone interviewed there in 1977 lived there in 1975. The differences between the unemployed and employed are not large, the most substantial being a seven percentage point difference between employed and unemployed men in their 1970 residence; the unemployed were slightly more likely to have lived on the Navajo Nation in 1970 than were the employed, a finding that supports the conclusion above that a period of off-Navajo Nation residence appears to enhance the likelihood that one would be employed in 1977.

In the border towns, however, whether one lived on the Navajo Nation in 1975 or in 1970 made a big difference in employment status in 1977. In each instance, for both men and women, the employed persons were more likely than the unemployed to have lived on the Navajo Nation. Seventy percent of the men employed

Table 41

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS LIVING ON THE NAVAJO NATION IN 1970 AND 1975, BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND GENDER, FOR NAVAJO NATION AND BORDER TOWNS, 1977

	Navajo Nation				Border Towns			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.
Lived on Navajo Nation, 1970	74%	81%	79%	83%	74%	62%	73%	46%
Number of Cases (N)	(567)	(1064)	(851)	(745)	(124)	(226)	(178)	(201)
Lived on Navajo Nation, 1975	95%	89%	94%	92%	70%	54%	64%	48%
Number of Cases (N)	(485)	(1096)	(768)	(764)	(188)	(187)	(125)	(166)

ITEMS: Did you live on the Navajo Nation in 1970?
Did you live on the Navajo Nation in 1975?

in the border towns had lived on the Navajo Nation in 1975, compared to 54 percent of the unemployed men, and the corresponding difference for women is 64 percent for employed women and 48 percent for the unemployed. It is likely that some of this substantial difference in 1977 employment is due to age and educational differences between people who had left the reservation fairly recently and those who had left more than seven years previously. It may also be that the unemployed Navajos in the border towns are long-term border town residents with fewer ties to the reservation than the employed, for they are a residual population in the sense that many Navajos, when unemployed, return to the reservation rather than remaining in the border towns.

Table 42 is an assessment of the volume of migration within the Navajo Nation and its apparent effects upon employment in 1977. The general finding is that

Table 42 about here

extent of within-Nation migration seems to have little bearing on employment. For respondents living on the Navajo Nation at the time of the interview, only a five-percentage-point difference separated the employed who had not moved during the 1970-75 period from the unemployed who had not moved during the same period. The slight difference is in the direction of a link between moving and being employed; that is, both men and women who were employed were more likely to have moved within the reservation at least once than were men and women who were not employed in 1977.

Number of within-Navajo Nation moves seems to have little effect upon employment rates of Navajos in border towns. The sub samples are small, and the larges difference is a moderate ten percentage points between employed and unemployed women, those women who had not migrated within the reservation between 1970 and 1975 being slightly more likely to be employed in the border towns.

Table 42

INTERNAL MIGRATION (NUMBER OF MOVES WITHIN THE NAVAJO NATION) FOR PERSONS RESIDING ON THE NAVAJO NATION AT SOME TIME BETWEEN 1970 AND 1975, BY PRESENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS, AND GENDER, NAVAJO NATION AND BORDER TOWNS, 1977.

Number of times moved within Navajo Nation, 1970-75	On Navajo Nation				Border Towns			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.
0	66%	71%	64%	69%	56%	54%	60%	50%
1	24	15	21	17	30	27	25	29
2	5	6	8	7	10	11	8	14
3	3	3	3	3	2	4	4	5
4	0	1	2	2	0	3	4	0
5 - 9	1	4	1	2	1	1	0	1
Total	99%	100%	99%	100%	99%	100%	101%	99%
Number of cases (N)	(477)	(1081)	(768)	(755)	(82)	(136)	(114)	(112)

ITEM: How many times did you move within the Navajo Nation between 1970 and 1975?

The final table on migration, Table 43, reveals significant differences between the unemployed and the employed respondents on the Navajo Nation in the reasons given for their migration away from the Navajo Nation. For all respondents,

Table 43 about here

both in the border towns and on the Navajo Nation, the reasons given for migrating off the Navajo Nation between 1960 and 1975 were either education or employment. For Navajo Nation respondents, migration for education is strongly correlated with being employed in 1977 both for men and women. Persons who had migrated from the Navajo Nation for employment reasons, and yet were residing on the Navajo Nation in 1977, were much more likely to be unemployed than were those who had migrated for reasons of education. Apparently they had left for employment, and having, for some reason, lost that employment, they had returned to the Navajo Nation where they joined the ranks of the unemployed.

Among border town respondents, the reason for leaving the Navajo Nation between 1960 and 1975 have no bearing on employment status for either men or women.

Summary

In summary, our analysis of employed and unemployed Navajos residing on and near the reservation, establishes the following major points:

(1) Employment opportunities on and near the reservation are severly limited because of the lack of manufacturing, heavy industry, and related support services. The occupational distribution on the reservation contains a disproportionately high number of professionals, managers, and service workers, most of whom are employed by the Navajo Tribe or agencies of the federal government.

(2) A significant percentage of the Navajo who are employed are working in areas for which they have been specifically trained. However, even in these areas, the limited number of jobs available contributes significantly to the extremely high unemployment rates.

Table 43

REASONS FOR MIGRATING FROM THE NAVAJO NATION, FOR RESPONDENTS WHO LIVED THERE AT ANY TIME BETWEEN 1960 AND 1975, AND MOVED AWAY AT LEAST ONCE, BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND GENDER, FOR NAVAJO NATION AND BORDER TOWNS, 1977

	Navajo Nation				Border Towns			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
Reason for out-migration	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.	Empl.	Unempl.
Employment	26%	46%	26%	41%	58%	57%	60%	56%
Education	46	38	64	52	33	25	35	34
Military	20	13	2	2	4	1	1	0
Other	8	3	8	5	4	17	3	11
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	99%	101%
Number of Cases (N)	(283)	(605)	(446)	(350)	(48)	(157)	(88)	(140)

ITEMS: For residents of the Navajo Nation: Have you lived off the Navajo Nation at any time since 1960? Why did you leave?

For employed residents of Border Towns: Have you lived off the Navajo Nation at any time since 1960? Why did you leave?

For unemployed residents of Border Towns: Have you lived on the Navajo Nation any time since 1960? Why did you move off the Navajo Nation?

(3) The employed Navajo labor force is a stable labor force. That is, those who have jobs tend to have a fairly long job tenure. This is determined largely by the number of workers who work for agencies like the BIA, Indian Health Services, and the Tribe.

(4) A majority of employed Navajos would be interested in upgrading their job skills and training.

(5) Contrary to popular stereotypes, a very substantial majority of unemployed Navajos, both men and women, desire to work and would work if employment opportunities were available to them.

(6) A substantial percentage of the unemployed report that they are actively seeking employment.

(7) For males, the primary factor that accounts for high unemployment rates is simply the absense of jobs on or near the reservation. This is also important for women but unemployed females are more likely to emphasize lack of skills or education as a barrier to finding adequate employment than are males.

(8) Not only are the unemployed actively seeking employment, most indicate a willingness to expend substantial effort to obtain employment. This includes willingness to move off the reservation or to another area of the reservation, to commute fairly long distances for employment, or to participate in a jobs training program in order to upgrade skills.

(9) Well-educated Navajos are much more likely to find employment, either on or off-reservation than are less-educated Navajos- There is a very strong linkage between education and job holding.

(10) The unmarried and the young (ages 15-24) are greatly overrepresented among the unemployed.

(11) Navajo women are more apt to be employed than are Navajo men.

(12) The apparent high concentration of Navajos on the Navajo Nation in the professional-technical category masks the fact that many of the occupations they follow are relatively low-status, residual (not elsewhere classified) jobs in education or in tribal and federal bureaucracies.

(13) Both in the border towns and on the Navajo Nation, Navajo women are highly concentrated in a few, relatively low-status occupations. Navajo men on the Navajo Nation are also highly concentrated in a few occupations, many of them managerial or in education, but off-reservation Navajo men seem to have access to a much wider variety of work.